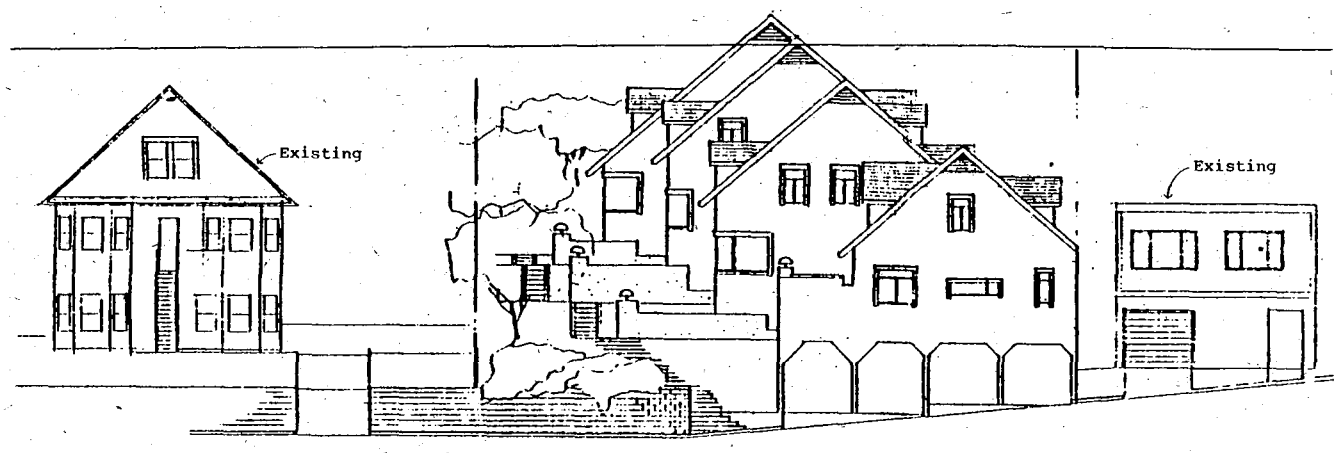
Legal Rights of Seniors in LARGE type—see page 5

BERNAL JOURNAL

A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SERVING BERNAL HEIGHTS AND SAN FRANCISCO

March –April Volume 18 No.1 COPYRIGHT 1981

The Real Holladay Story



This is how the proposed cottages will look from Holladay Avenue.

by Barbara Kosman and David Butterfield

It seemed to be a good idea: a non-profit venture into housing for low-to-middle income families on Bernal's East Slope. But the good idea became an angry dispute between formerly united grassroots leaders. The fight soon involved hundreds of neighborhood people and eventually ended up at City Hall.

The Bernal Heights Community Foundation, acting on something they felt was supported by the community, announced in April 1980, a plan to build four units of government subsidized housing on Holladay Avenue. To the Foundation's total surprise, opposition erupted in the neighborhood. Ironically, it was led by those who had in the past been in agreement with the BHCF.

Opponents of the housing said that the BHCF was *not* acting in their behalf when the housing was planned. Now, almost a year later, there is still dissension and unresolved anger toward the BHCF and the proposed housing.

Issues and Answers

There is concern that the type of people subsidized housing will bring would change the character of the neighborhood. Some want the neighborhood to remain as it is and are opposed to any kind of development. Others are categorically against all types of government housing. Safety and Fire Department access are also cited as reasons against further development on Holladay Avenue. However, the major problem has been a lack of communication and confusion about the issue in the proposed neighborhood.

According to Buck Bagot, co-director of the BHCF, *"What we want to do is provide affordable, energy efficient and attractive housing for the residents of Bernal Heights. We are surprised and dismayed at the objections of some East Slope residents, especially in light of the city's need for affordable housing, the recommendations of the East Slope Study (framed by East Slope residents) and the fact that this is nice housing."* But Cynthia Ehrlich, an opponent of the housing, says, *"It sets a precedent for this hill for building not only houses on every vacant lot, but apartments on every lot and is against everything I enjoy about living in this neighborhood."*

Joan Holden and June Cooperman, both Montcalm Street residents, support the homes. According to Holden, *"It's the only good-looking housing that's been proposed. Housing by a non-profit organization would be a wonderful precedent."* Cooperman states, *"I was depressed that so many people would come out against it, but I appreciate that they were concerned about preserving the quality of the neighborhood."*

Neighborhood Notification

Art Grossman of Wright Street, a supporter, said, *"I think the BHCF was keeping us in the dark. They failed to get the word out."* The BHCF responds that in June, Bobby Apton, chairman of the East Slope Design Review Board, was given plans and assumed the responsibility for calling a meeting. The meeting was not held for two months. The BHCF says that they should have insisted on a meeting sooner. Also, Roger Borgenicht, co-director of the Foundation, admits that they now realize it should have been publicized more widely in April.

Gene Bates, a four year resident of the East Slope, feels the BHCF did not find out what the residents wanted, but *"went ahead on the assumption they knew what was best and that nobody of good will would disagree. They don't live in our neighborhood, yet they have the arrogance to build despite our objections."* The BHCF felt the neighborhood was aware and supported their plans, because the East Slope Study recommended a priority for low and middle

(continued on page 7)

WHAT HAPPENED

A Chronology of Events

November 1979—BHCF bought land parcel at 424-434 Holladay Avenue.

April 7, 1980—BHCF notified neighborhood of intentions to build four homes.

June 10—BHCF submitted budget proposal to Office of Community Development. Included Holladay plans and plans for "16 plus" units on East Slope.

June 26—BHCF gave plans to Apton who took responsibility to notify neighborhood.

September 3—meeting held at Precita Center at request of BHCF.

September 15—meeting held by opposition.

September 28—meeting held at 120 Faith Street to attract neighborhood. "Hundreds" of households notified. People were angry; architect Bob Herman was prevented from speaking. Concern for type of people who would occupy project.

October 16—variance issued for four units.

November—appeals filed by opposition on permits.

October-November—members of BHCF met individually with signers of appeals.

Late November-early December— petition opposing housing acquires 400 signatures. Flyer circulated: "Thirty-three housing projects . . .pilot project . . . attend the Supervisors' hearing." Alleged author of flyer—Bobby Apton. BHCF flyers circulated in response: "You've been told lies" by petitioners against cottages. Explains size of cottages, how many people could occupy them, and commitment not to build anything more on East Slope without neighborhood approval.

December 8, 1980—Board of Supervisors' Hearing. Large group of opposition attended. A few spoke for and against and meeting was postponed.

December 15, 1980—hearing reconvened. More supporters present. BHCF side presented convincingly. Supervisors re-affirmed conditional use permit and environmental evaluation.

January 15, 1981—variance granted.

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BERNAL JOURNAL

A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SERVING
BERNAL HEIGHTS AND SAN FRANCISCO

The *Bernal Journal* is an open forum of the community sponsored by the Bernal Fund. It is dedicated to providing the people of Bernal Heights with neighborhood news, ideas, issues, and events. Articles with by-lines express the views of the individual and not necessarily those of the *Journal* or its editors.

The next meeting of the *Bernal Journal* is:

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 8 p.m.
399 Cortland

Deadlines for ads, classifieds, cartoons, photos, announcements, and articles is:
APRIL 10

All manuscripts must be typed, doubled-spaced. We reserve the right to edit all articles for clarity or space.

EDITORS: Barbara Bagot, Barbara Kosman
COMMUNITY REPORTER: R.J. Dutra
TREASURER: Jerry Schwartz
ADVERTISING: Jerry Schwartz, Rex Coultas, Lill Kruse

CONTRIBUTORS: Rich Yurman, Fred Strickland, Florence Monzasch, Gail Caswell, Terry Preston

Thanks to the Precita Center for great work space!

Send all contributions to
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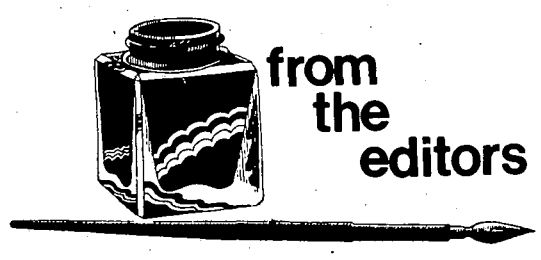

Our lead story on the Holladay Avenue development addresses a delicate subject around which there has been much confusion and which caused division among formerly unified neighbors: Should housing affordable to low-to-middle income people be built in this Bernal Heights neighborhood? In view of the fact that certain concerns needed to be expressed, and recognizing the need for housing in San Francisco, we hope that our story will resolve unanswered questions and shed some much needed light on the issue.

Continued success to the Mission Blue Cafe, which celebrated its first anniversary in February.

Congratulations to Jeanne Hamer and Charlene Martinez of Elsie Street, who were presented with the Jo Ruffin Geriatric Services Award by the S.E. Mental Health Community Advisory Board, in recognition of their special contributions to quality mental health services in the community.

More Festival Photos

Supervisor Nancy Walker (left) and Ruth McGinnis share the Festival spotlight. *Photos : Jim White*

Precita News

Precita's Youth Basketball team played its first away game with St. Anthony's School scoring two points to their opponent's twenty! Precita's team complained they were unfamiliar with St. Anthony's court; the baskets are too high. Also, they didn't have their coach: he had to stay at the Center because the director was "at a meeting."

Since being hired the end of October, Chavez has increased the hours Precita Center stays open, added new programs, and has offered daily after school supervised activities. One new Program is Teen & Adult Basketball, Wednesdays from 6 to 9 p.m. This draws an "only in Bernal" mixed group of players for some hard, healthy exercise. This program will be canceled if Chavez is laid off.

The Precita Staff and Board have cited the lack of supervised youth activities and the upcoming Summer '81 Program as reasons for keeping Chavez by transferring him to a vacant CETA Title II slot.

Vola Ruben's popular after school "Arts & Playcrafts" class will also be canceled due to the CETA layoffs. Other funding is being sought to continue an arts and crafts program at the Center through Spring and Summer.

Planning for the Summer Program is stymied by the eminent cutbacks and cost hikes. Summer teen employment may be curtailed by as much as 25 percent. The price of buses for field trips has skyrocketed. Staff cutbacks can only *reduce* the activities and services offered by the Center.

Precita's Program Planning Board has a task ahead just keeping the doors open. Gym space is at a premium in this end of the City; Precita's 60-year-old gym has scheduled activities seven days a week. Still local youth complain it is not open often enough or long enough for the "drop-in" recreation they are seeking. Arts and crafts are offered three afternoons a week; youths want it for five days and clamor for field trips on the weekends.

At the same time community groups seek Center space for meetings, programs, and activities, putting further demands on staff time. Adults complain about a lack of programs for them; parents want additional after-school activities for their children. People view teenage boredom and resentment, the resulting vandalism and violence, and wonder why the Center doesn't do something about it.

Community support comes through the Program Planning Board, a group of local residents headed by Board president Jane Wrench. New Board members are being recruited to help with programming and fundraising. For more information call Center director, Robert Dutra, or Board president Jane Wrench at 285-7833. □

LIBRARY NEWS

Now through March 12 –
Black History Exhibit: Black History Murals.
A tribute to Black Artists.

March 10 –
Children's Room – Movies – 10:30 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.: "The Beast of Monsieur Racine," "Curious George Rides a Bike," "Hansel & Gretel," "Rosie's Walk," "Strega Noona," "The Trip."

Preschool Story Hours: Thursdays 1:30 p.m.

Library Hours: Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri 1-6 p.m.;
Tues 10 a.m.-12 noon/1-6 p.m.

CARNAVAL
SAN FRANCISCO 1981
534 Precita Avenue, San Francisco, CA. 94110

CARNAVAL 81
A Grand Parade and Festival
Sunday, April 12, 1981
for information call 285-7833

Home Improvement Fair Planned

by Barbara Moorman

The Bernal Heights Association is planning a HOME AND COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT FAIR in May to provide residents of the hill with the resources, knowledge, and skills needed to improve their homes and neighborhoods. Individuals and groups will have booths in the exhibit area, demonstrating such things as how to use passive solar energy in your home or what outdoor plants are most suitable to Bernal weather. Free classes and presentations will also be scheduled throughout the day. Renters can learn how to save money on their PG&E bills or how to cooperate with others to buy.

Exhibitors and other "home improvement workers" will also have a chance to be listed in a Bernal directory of Home and Community Improvement Resources, to be distributed at the fair.

NEEDED.... volunteers to work on the fair.

Just call the committee person listed below:

•program:	Kate Esposito (285-7403) or Patrick Ritter (282-1364)
•publicity:	Barbara Moorman (648-0830) or Jeff Norby (282-1553)
•logistics:	Phil Lyons (647-1416)
•directory.	Steve Birnbaum (648-0830)

William Corman
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Richard Ingram

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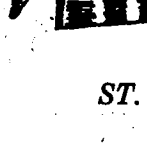

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HAPPY (?) BIRTHDAY ESMERALDA

Hard-working neighbors take a much-needed break at the Esmeralda Mini Park construction site.

Mixed Feelings About Minipark

by Phoebe McAfee

Esmeralda Park is now 2 years old. For any Bernal Heights residents who don't know where this park is, let me invite you to take a pleasant walk.

Esmeralda Park itself starts at Winfield and slides down toward Prospect Street. In the planter box at the Winfield landing are rosemary, ceanothus, and hebe, all with purple flowers. The tree is a pepper tree. There is a picnic table, and lots of places to sit, but you must experience the slide at least once! At the bottom of the double slide is a play structure and swings for kids. The steps continue on down, with another landing at Lundy's Lane, ending at Coleridge Street.

The steps were built in the early 1970's, and many trees were planted. From then until 1978, a committee of neighbors planned and pushed and worked until the park was funded and became a reality in 1978, with six months of intense neighborhood labor, and a lot of enthusiasm and love of work well done. Since then, about half of the plants have survived and are growing and blooming, the wood has weathered, and there are little hollows at the bottom of the slide from many landings. The park is well used by the children of the neighborhood.

There is another, sadder side to this story. It is difficult for me to write about this part of my neighborhood, much as I enjoy living here. Esmeralda Park is only 2 years old, yet many of those neighbors who helped build it have forgotten about it. Others abuse it. A few maintain it, where many should. It is sad to see so much graffiti, and to see how quickly it returns after neighbors spend time and effort to paint over it. It is especially sad to see so much trash thrown about, in particular the broken bottles around the children's play structure. It is painful to see so many young plants deliberately broken and destroyed. We were going to plant many more street trees, but most of those we did plant are already dead. I hesitate to write about these disappointments, but they should be acknowledged. We in this neighborhood are all busy earning our living, raising our families, working on so many other important neighborhood concerns. Perhaps if each one of us who use and enjoy this tiny bit of public park would help to nurture it and maintain it, and if we would teach our children to care for their surroundings and to consider their neighbors, the park would remain in better, safer shape. □

Neighborhood Unity

Bernal Heights Council

The Bernal Heights Council (BHC) was founded on February 5, 1981 by representatives from 14 neighborhood organizations: Coleridge Street Neighbors, Community Boards, Northwest Bernal Block Club, Holly Park Block Club, Park Andover Block Club, Bernal Heights Association, St. Kevin's Latino Group, St. Kevin's Filipino Association, St. Kevin's Parish Staff, Powhattan Block Club, Bernal Heights Food Coop, Bernal Heights Community Foundation, Bernal Recycling Center, and Cortland Merchants Association. Recognizing crime and the needs of youth as the most pressing and universal issues facing Bernal Heights, the Council wants to launch a united, hillwide campaign to reduce the level of crime, and to fight for jobs, activities, and city services to improve the neighborhood. For more info, call Jay or Donna at 647-4255. □

Enforce Elsie

by Barbara Bagot

The Northwest Bernal Block Club (NWBBC) is gearing up for the culmination of years of hard work and planning. The time has come to enforce the *Elsie Street Plan,* a comprehensive plan written by the neighborhood in 1978 to ensure the safe, affordable, rational development of the 100-block of Elsie Street.

This narrow, steep roadway is substandard even now: fire and emergency vehicle access is severely hampered. Nevertheless, it's a speculator's dream due to its many vacant lots and breathtaking view of the city. In the face of profit-motivated housing developers, neighbors must continue to have a voice in its future development.

Richard Alvarez is one such builder, who wishes to erect bulky, box-like, exorbitantly-priced houses – in total disregard for the character and safety of the neighborhood. He has, over the years: attempted to build seven to ten identical houses without consideration of the substandard street; proposed widening the street just in front of his lots, which would create a hazardous "bottleneck" situation; tried to install sprinkler systems in his houses, in lieu of improving the street, again ignoring the safety of all of the residents.

The NWBBC is determined to prevent the *DiamondHeightsification* of Bernal Heights: they

(continued on page 4)

Make Music This Spring

Community Music Center will hold registration for Spring Quarter classes on Friday, March 27, from 2-6 pm, and Saturday, March 28, from 10am-2pm. Classes for new students begin April 6 and end the week of June 22.

Founded in 1921, the Center provides music instruction in music of the western classical tradition, jazz, Chinese, Latin, and popular styles. Group classes for children as young as four; individual instruction in voice for children and adults. Also San Francisco Children's Chorus free for all registered students.

The only entrance requirement is that the student be interested in learning. Fees set per family income. Info/ free catalog: 647-6015/544 Capp Street, SF 94110.

THE CORTLAND AVENUE PLAN for commercial revitalization will be discussed at a neighborhood meeting on Tuesday, March 17 at 399 Cortland. Copies of plan available for review at the Bernal Library, 500 Cortland and City Planning Dept., 100 Larkin.

Brunch is back...

Goat Hill

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St. Kevin's

St. Kevin's continues each year to provide community experiences to the wider Bernal Heights area. The Senior Lunch and Activity Program: lunch served Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; local shopping and outing trips Tuesdays and Thursdays. This program will be transferred to the new Neighborhood Center in the Fall of '81. St. Kevin's annual Festival on May 15-16-17 with the theme of I LOVE YOU CALIFORNIA, encourages wider community participation.

Other community opportunities continue for children needing tutoring help Monday through Thursday at 3:30 in Anderson Hall. Provided by the Community College district are the English class on Monday and Wednesday at 9:00 and the Citizenship class on Thursdays at 9:30.

A Co-operative Pre-School operates on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. These and many other programs and activities were publicized to the wider community in our door-to-door Home Visiting Program which started last year.

The Summer Program continues its 14th year of operation from July 6 to July 31.

All Bernal Heights residents are welcome and encouraged to participate. □

BHCF NOTES

Bernal Heights is described as "the last frontier" by the housing industry in San Francisco. Now is the time for the residents of the hill to become familiar with and active in the Bernal Heights Community Foundation: a non-profit community based organization with the goal of preserving and improving Bernal Heights as a low and moderate income, ethnically integrated, architecturally diverse neighborhood with its fair share of city and community services!

In order for neighbors to have control over the inevitable high-priced speculative development that has come to pass in other neighborhoods of San Francisco, the BHCF urges the people who live and work here to participate in the three major programs of the foundation: housing development, community services, and neighborhood planning and organization.

The BHCF office is at 399 Cortland Avenue. There is a board of directors composed of Bernal residents dedicated to the foundation's goal, a staff including Vista volunteers, and committees working on the various programs, made up of board members, staff, and neighbors. *All* meetings are open to *all* neighbors, and begin at 7:30 PM. The board meets on the second Monday of each month. The Housing Committee meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month, and is presently addressing new construction of affordable housing and voluntary rehabilitation of existing houses. The Neighborhood Center Committee which meets the first Wednesday of each month, is renovating the buildings at 513 and 515 Cortland Avenue and planning the programs that will occupy the center (including Head Start, the Bernal Journal, Senior hot lunch, block clubs, recycling, youth, alternative energy, etc.). What would *you* like to have in your neighborhood center?

The Planning and Organization Committee is coordinating block club activity on the hill and identifying issues of common concern to residents: crime, beautification, services such as Muni, library, fire and police.

Let's see some new faces and ideas at these meetings, and plan our future on Bernal Heights.

In the next issue of the Bernal Journal, the BHCF will introduce those neighbors who serve on the board of directors. □

Elsie Street *(continued from page 3)*

intend to preserve the architecturally diverse, multi-ethnic, working class character of their neighborhood. To accomplish this end, the *Elsie Street Plan* calls for:

- the entire block to be improved before construction of any new dwelling;
- houses designed to be compatible with the diverse character of the neighborhood;
- energy-efficient homes;
- some homes affordable to low and moderate income people.

The Block Club meets the 1st Monday of every month at 7:30, at 150 Elsie Street. Topics at the March 2nd meeting: The history of Elsie Street, an update on current events, and plans for the spring block party. All neighbors (especially residents of the Bonview-to-Coleridge/Coso-to-Cortland area) are invited. For Info: Jeanne 285-3425. □

SPANISH LESSONS w/ exp. language teacher. Maria 821-2940 or 282-2636.

B.H.A. Update

by Steve Birnbaum, President

MUNI SERVICE: Members of BHA have been noticing a steady decline in the quality and quantity of Muni service going and coming from the hill. "The wait for the 10-Monterey has gone from ten to twenty minutes," Pat Helton recently stated. The 25-Bryant, according to other members, has been getting more and more crowded. In response to these and other concerns, the BHA Executive Board invited P.U.C. Commissioner Nancy Lenvin and Muni planner Susan Chelone (a former Bernal resident) to the January meeting in order to get some information and express concerns.

In spite of the first major rainstorm of the season, 25 hearty members of the Association heard a presentation and asked some important questions of Ms. Lenvin and Ms. Chelone. The general response was that Muni's problems stem from inadequate management and that this was being rectified. Susan Chelone also said that the use of the smaller coaches on the 10 line was discontinued for peak hours.

The meeting answered some of our questions, but generally left doubts about getting better service. The Association decided to write letters to the Muni requesting some definite answers on service, and Jon Steiner and Jerry Vail volunteered to compose them and stay on top of the issue. We will see what happens.

The next meeting of the Bernal Heights Association will be held on March 19, 1981 at 7:30 P.M. in St. Kevin's new hall, 704 Cortland. There will be refreshments and you don't have to be a member to come. If you want to be put on the mailing list call 648-0830 after 6:00 P.M. □

Recycle Your Stuff!

Are you ready for some heavy statistics? The following is from an article from the California Solid Waste Management Board's newsletter:

> *Why Recycle? Recycling saves energy. If Californians recycled all their bottles, aluminum cans and paper, they would save about 150 million gallons of oil each year, because it takes less energy to make products from recycled materials than from unprocessed "virgin" materials....*
>
> *Recycling protects the environment.... We are running out of places to put our solid waste. Recycling one ton of material saves three cubic yards of landfill space.*
>
> *Recycling conserves natural resources.... Recycling conserves finite raw materials and reduces America's dependency on mineral imports. Paper recycling preserves our forests and water resources.*

You don't have to be a math whiz to conclude that recycling makes ecological and economical sense. The Bernal Recycling Center is recording a gradual increase in recycled material each month. That is a gratifying sign of progress in the solid waste disposal problem. The Center is located at 100 Alemany Boulevard in the rear parking lot of the Farmers' Market and operates every Saturday from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. We accept newspaper, tin, aluminum, all types of glass, corrugated cardboard and computer paper. For more information call Charles or Violet at 647-4255. □

Wanted: The *Bernal Journal* is looking for someone to help sell ads. Commission paid. Call 821-3888.

Legal Tips for Seniors

by Steven Birnbaum

Legal Assistance to the Elderly (LAE), offers free legal advice and representation to seniors who are 58 years of age or older. If you need help, call 434-3895.

Unfortunately, SSI will not be going up as fast as before. However, the most important provision, which gives seniors who receive SSI an automatic cost of living increase, was maintained.

If you receive Social Security checks, Supplemental Security check, Civil Service or Railroad Retirement Annuity, or Veterans Administration payments (VA), you can have that money deposited directly into your bank, credit union, or savings and loan accounts.

Question: What is so good about direct deposit?
Answer: Direct deposit saves you time and money. It also means that you don't have to worry about your check being stolen or lost. It also gets into your bank faster.

If you want to sign up for Direct Deposit, take your check to your financial organization and tell them you want to sign up for Direct Deposit. Make sure that you take your check because that contains the information that they need. They will then give you a copy of the completed application and they will send the original to the government. The government will start forwarding your check to your bank or other financial institution within 90 days. In the meantime, you will continue to receive your check.

Legal Assistance to the Elderly has published a file guide to housing resources, rights and benefits for San Francisco Seniors. It contains lists of rental housing, instructions on finding a good moving company and many other important facts. You can pick up your free guide at the Bernal Library or call 434-3895 for instructions on how to get one.

The California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) has published a "California State Transportation Map," listing bus, passenger rail and air travel services throughout the state. You can write to CALTRANS, Division of Mass Transportation, Sacramento, CA 95807.

This column is printed in large type as a service to seniors. Please let us hear your reactions and suggestions for other articles.

PRECITA EYES ART CLASSES

- LIFE DRAWING WORKSHOP – a workshop featuring nude and costumed models with pizzaz. Beginners, artists, and muralists invited. Tues. 7-9 p.m. $3 per session.
- PAINTING FOR SPIRITUAL AWARENESS – a life enhancing approach to painting through color, light, and form. For the beginning and experienced painter. Mon. and Wed. 7-10 p.m. $4 per session.
- MURAL PAINTING – prepares painters to plan and direct their own murals and with groups. Learn to enlarge sketch, develop a theme, color and composition, mural slides and references. Wed. 2-5 p.m. and Thurs. 7:30-10 p.m. $4 per session.
- MURAL WALKS – are guided by an experienced muralist. 1st and 3rd Sat. of month, 1:30-3 p.m. $3 general, $1 for students, seniors, and children.

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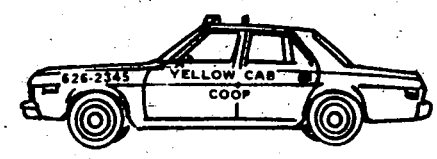

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BHA MEMBERSHIP

I pledge to try to better my neighborhood in any way I can. Here's my $2.

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Phone

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Send to:
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SENIORS IN NEED: Transitional care homes need used (or new!) clothing. Call Jeanne 285-3425.

HOUSECLEANING: Responsible and reasonable. W/refs. Maria 821-2940 or 282-2636.

'Copa de Oro'

BERNAL HEIGHTS NATURAL HISTORY

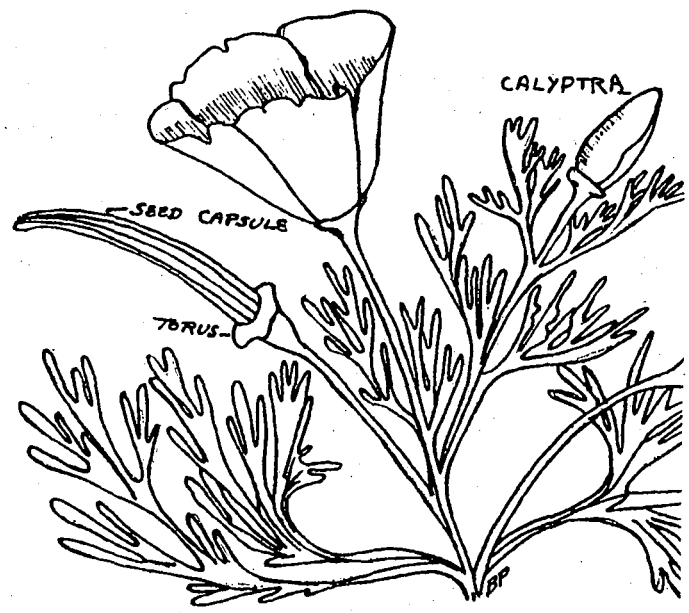
by Barbara M. Pitschel

A plant with which everyone is familiar, and which many of us take for granted – our state flower, is the California poppy, or *Eschscholtzia californica.* This species is relatively common on Bernal Hill. Early in the season, its blue-grey foliage presents a striking contrast to the more usual shades of green vegetation.

What seems common to us would probably have appeared sparse to early mariners along the California coast, who saw poppy fields carpeting every inch of ground for many miles. They referred to it as "the land of fire," and "la sabinilla de San Pasqual" ("the altar cloth of St. Pascal").

The first botanist to attempt to classify the poppy was Archibald Menzies, a naturalist on Captain George Vancouver's expedition aboard the "Discovery." Menzies' assignment was to study the vegetation, wildlife, and mineral resources of this area to assess its suitability for settlement. Menzies collected the first specimen in 1792, and introduced it to England in 1794, but he classified it incorrectly.

It was not until 1816 that the plant was correctly described, classified, and named by Adelbert von Chamisso. Von Chamisso was a naturalist with the Russian scientific and trapping voyage of Kotzebue. He developed a close friendship with the ship's surgeon, Dr. Johann Frederich (Ivan Ivanovitch) Eschscholtz, a naturalist as well as a physician. When von Chamisso collected the poppy on the San Francisco sand dunes, he named it for his friend.



Eschscholtzia californica
California poppy

Many writers have expressed dismay that such a beautiful flower was given such an unpronounceable name. The Spanish appelations "Amapola" and "Torosa" are certainly more melodious, and "Copa de oro" ("cup of gold") is an accurate description as well. The Spanish also called the plant "Dormidera" ("sleepy one"), which may refer either to its mildly soporific juice, or its habit of closing at night and during cloudy weather.

Scottish botanist and gardener David Douglas, who made visits to the Pacific coast between 1825 and 1833, sent a collection of *Eschscholtzia* seeds to the London Horticultural Society, where it was, for the first time, successfully cultivated.

Although we tend to appreciate the aesthetic properties of this plant, it is interesting to note that it has also been put to practical use. The Indians served the boiled or roasted leaves as a vegetable. The watery juice was used as a pain killer. The Spanish mixed it with pine gum as a toothache remedy, and with suet or olive oil (and perfume) as a hair tonic.

The plants' method of seed dispersal is fascinating. After pollination, the petals, no longer needed as an attractant, are shed. The two-valved seed capsule elongates to two or three inches. This capsule is held at the base by a two-ring receptacle. When the seeds are ripe, the mature capsule is released, permitting the two valves to separate, and the capsule to open. There is considerable energy in this process, and the capsule frequently opens in flight, effectively disseminating seeds. (I have always associated the name "poppy" with this "popping" seed dispersal.)

This species exhibits such extreme variability that, for California alone, 50 different species have been proposed. Several varieties have already been named. It ranges from the annuals of southern California and the San Joaquin Valley to the perennials of our open grasslands. On Bernal Hill we have plants that bloom twice a year. These exhibit spectacular deep-orange flowers in spring, and smaller, yellow flowers with orange centers, in late summer and autumn. I have seen straw-colored and even white petal variations on our hill. We are often fortunate in being able to see these flowers blooming on Bernal Hill from February to October, but they are usually at their most glorious during March and April. □

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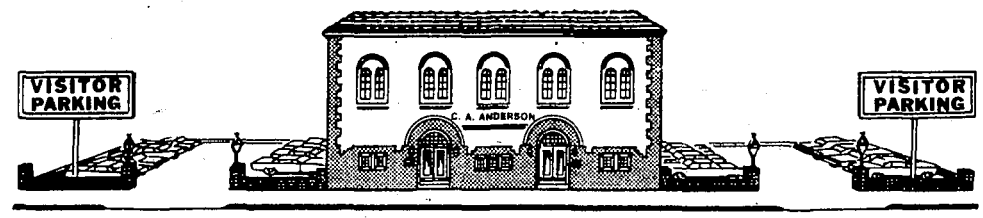

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HOLLADAY STORY *(continued from page 1)*

income housing, and two East Slope residents were on the BHCF board of directors when plans for the four units were discussed. In addition, many East Slope people were in the East Slope Capital Improvement Task Force, which assesses needs for streets, sewers, lighting, etc.

How Many Units?

Bobby Apton, as a contributor to the East Slope Study, was perhaps the loudest voice of the opposition. He was, mainly through his own effort, able to convince nearly 400 people to sign a petition against the Holladay houses. Apton also produced a widely distributed and unsigned flyer that denounced the project and, among other things, stated that the BHCF planned to build thirty-three more projects on the East Slope. This caused a great deal of anger and even more confusion. *"Four units we can handle,"* reflected Max Kirkeberg of Peralta Street. Yet, when told by Apton that thirty-three more would be constructed, Kirkeberg became an opponent of the plan. The BHCF response was slow; the neighborhood was becoming divided.

When asked where he derived his figures, Apton referred to a BHCF budget proposal to the Office of Community Development which lists various items including: *"New Construction... East Slope site – 16+ units lower income/section 8 housing in conjunction with private developer..."*

"It was no secret," Buck Bagot states, *"the BHCF was talking to contractors as far back as 1979. In working with the Capital Improvements Task Force it was decided not to continue the 16-plus project. It wasn't getting enough active neighborhood support."* He said the decision was made sometime in the Spring of 1980.

Why did the BHCF submit plans for the "16-plus" units in June if they were decided against in the Spring? *"At that time"* states Bagot, *"It was just a proposal, but we still wanted to keep our options open."* He stressed that all BHFC proposals to the OCD are always made conditional to neighborhood approval. *"The Holladay flack just reinforced our reason not to pursue it."* The Foundation has announced publicly its commitment not to develop the East Slope further, other than the four Holladay units, without the request of the community. It can be concluded that the vocal oppositon has had an affect on BHCF plans for the East Slope.

To the charge that the BHCF "is just another developer," Borgenicht responds that *"the BHCF has always been a developer, but we consider it an alternative developer because we are non-profit and we have a commitment to low-income housing, safety, neighborhood control, good design and preserving the character of Bernal Heights."*

What Lies Ahead?

Asked what he thinks is in store, Gene Bates says, *"It's a foregone conclusion that the houses will be built."* In fact the city supports the plans to build. The building permit will be applied for in three or four months and the BHCF expects to begin building around that time. *"We will show plans to the neighborhood well before that time"* states Borgenicht.

Who is funding the four units? The BHCF says they have a commitment from the California Housing Finance Agency for construction and mortgage financing, but the CHFA doesn't have funds at present due to interest rates and legislative problems. *"Maybe that will come through, but we'll also look at other avenues such as HUD."*

What other plans does the BHCF have? *"We have no other plans for the development of the East Slope,"* says Borgenicht. *"Our main project for 1981 is funding for voluntary rehabilitation of existing homes of low income residents."* They are also rehabilitating a storefront on Cortland Avenue to become the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center. □

What the People are Saying

Quotes from East Slope Neighbors

Rachelle Resnick – *"The idea is wonderful, but it turned into a tragic situation for the neighborhood."* The leaflets were *"hysterical and inaccurate. There wasn't enough education done by the BHCF."*

Bobby Apton, chairman of East Slope Design Review Board – *"There was a fire at the location. The street can't accomodate fire trucks ... I was told that one out of the four residents will be non-minority. I object to the selection of residents on the basis of socio-economic or racial basis. That is racist."* Buck Bagot, BHCF, responds – *"Preserving the ethnic diversity of the hill is a goal of the Foundation and will be reflected in the selection process."*

Tony McKenzie, – *"Some people are not paying their dues and I did. Especially if I have to pay with my taxes... It's not fair–some people have their rent subsidized–why not everyone in the neighborhood?"*

Gene Bates – *"My backyard is adjacent to the 'common area.' I fully expect vandalism... I lived near the 15th and Valencia projects. No one would love to be proved wrong more than myself, but..."*

Bob Dutra – *"I was disappointed. I thought this was one neighborhood that would support this. If the community leaders can't get together, how are we going to get new people interested in neighborhood issues?"*

(Editor's note: We encourage letters in response to this article.)

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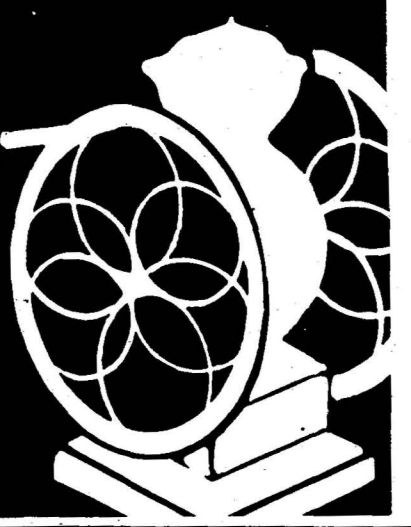

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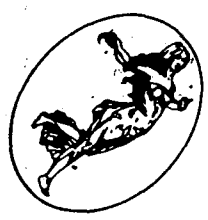

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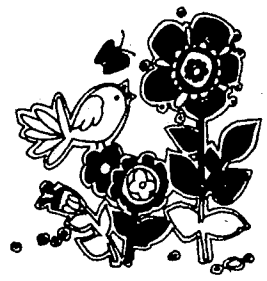

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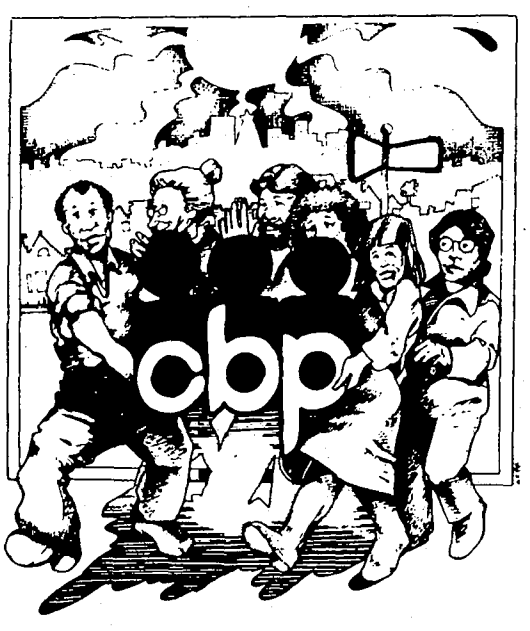

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